Worst Jobs in History: Worksheet

• This simulation is designed to help you understand the terrible working conditions experienced by ordinary people in history. You can use the information you learn here to help answer the Big Question "Was life good or bad during this period?".

• Complete this worksheet as you progress through the simulation.

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| boring | **Most Dangerous Job** |
| Title of the Job | Lime burner |
| What does this job involve? | Burn lime rock in powder for use in plaster for cathedrals. |
| What makes this job so **dangerous**? | Lime rock gives off poisonous fumes which can cause workers to pass out in their own kilns. Any lime that lands on the skin (before being neutralized) will burn straight through it, and if it gets in your eyes, you’ll be blinded for life. |

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| dangerous | **Most Dirty Job** |
| Title of the Job | Gong scourer |
| What does this job involve? | Cart sewage/waste out of the city to dump into the river. |
| What makes this job so **dirty**? | It is so dirty that you are only allowed to work at night. You’ll stink so much you’ll have to live far away from the city. |

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| tiring | **Most Tiring Job** |
| Title of the Job | Treadmill operator |
| What does this job involve? | A treadmill made of wooden planks turned by a man walking inside of it: to lift stone up to the workers |
| What makes this job so **tiring**? | Operator is hundreds of feet in the air, trying to keep a steady momentum. If his hands or feet go through the gaps in the planks, they were mashed off. |

**Conclusion**

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| What was your final factual test score? | 100% |
| What job did the computer give to you based on this score? | Toad Eater |
| If this job is not already mentioned above, describe what this job involves. | Criminals who wanted people to buy their fake medicine would “heal” their assistants who ate toads, which people thought were poisonous. |

**Extension Tasks**

**1. Diamond 9 Diagram**

Produce a diamond 9 diagram using classtools.net.

Put the names of the jobs in the 9 boxes with a brief description of what each one involved. Then place the nastiest job at the top, and the least nasty job at the bottom.

Colour code your jobs (blue=dirty; red=dangerous; yellow=tiring).

Finally, explain why you ordered the jobs the way you did using the space at the right.

Save your "widget" when you are finished, or print it off.

**2. Decision-Making Tree**

Make notes on each of the 9 jobs given to you by the computer at the end of the simulation.

Your job is to construct a questionnaire which guides people towards their ideal “rubbish job”. Each question should be answered either “yes” or “no” (e.g. “Do you like working outdoors?”, “Do you like working with animals?”).

The “Yes” answers should ideally lead to 5 possible jobs, and the “No” answers lead to the other five jobs. Then, you have to come up with further questions which slowly narrow down each “branch” of your decision tree to just one job.

Try your decision trees out on each other around the class. Do you end up being allocated the same job? Do the people trying out your decision tree seem to agree that the job you match them to is the best option?

**3. Role-Play Dialogue**

The class should be arranged into small groups of 3-4 people. Each person within the group should have been matched up to a different “rubbish job” by the computer.

Construct an in-role dialogue between the characters in the group. Each member of the group wants to convince the others that their job is the worst of all. Start with each person describing what the job involves; then move on to “In what ways is the job dangerous?”, “In what ways is the job dirty?” and “In what ways is the job tiring?”.

Be prepared to exaggerate a little to make your job sound truly awful. The best inspiration should come from the famous Monty Python “Four Yorkshiremen” sketch which is easily located on [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com).